

# **Kindred Wellness Service: Researching Journaling's Benefits for Mental Wellness**

## **Undergraduate Research Thesis**

*Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with research distinction in  
Visual Communication Design in the undergraduate colleges of The Ohio State University.*

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be kind  
be kind  
be kind  
be kind  
kindred  
be kind  
be kind  
be kind  
be kind

## ABOUT KINDRED

An app & website service for those struggling with their mental health to match them with their perfectly suited therapist.

## OVERVIEW

People's experiences with therapy are often controlled by their therapist and type of therapy they attend. Kindred is a platform that creates a positive experience & normalizes therapy in today's society.

# initial research

For my initial research, I completed secondary research and primary research. I did a media scan of similar therapy matching sites and a survey to find people's opinions about therapy. I also completed 8 different interviews. I conducted 2 surveys with those inexperienced with therapy, 4 with those who are experienced, and 2 expert interviews with real therapists.

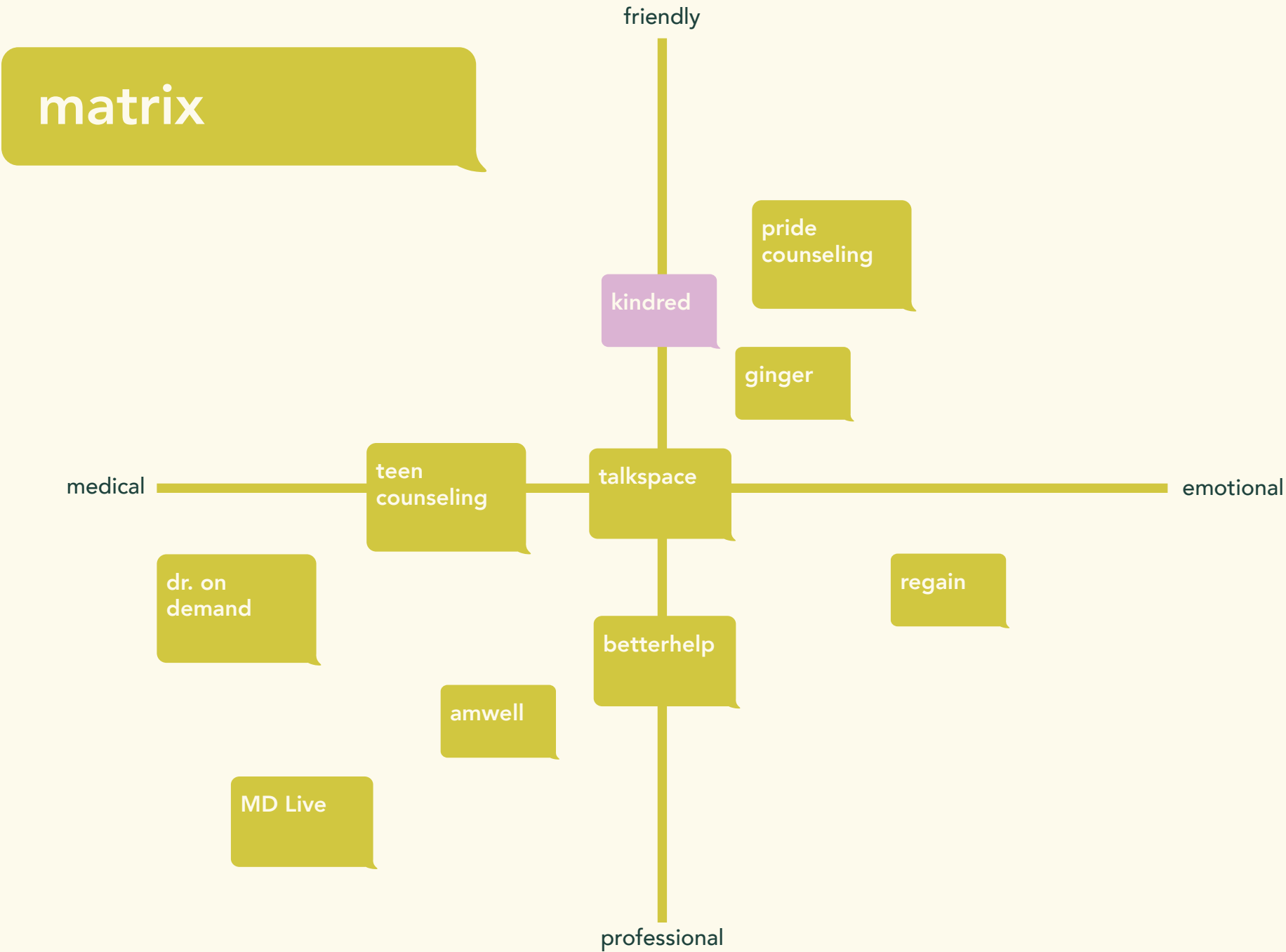
## RESEARCHING THE PROBLEM

**One in four** people in the world will be **affected by mental or neurological disorders** at some point in their lives.

**Around 450 million people currently suffer from such conditions**, placing mental disorders among the leading causes of ill-health and disability worldwide.

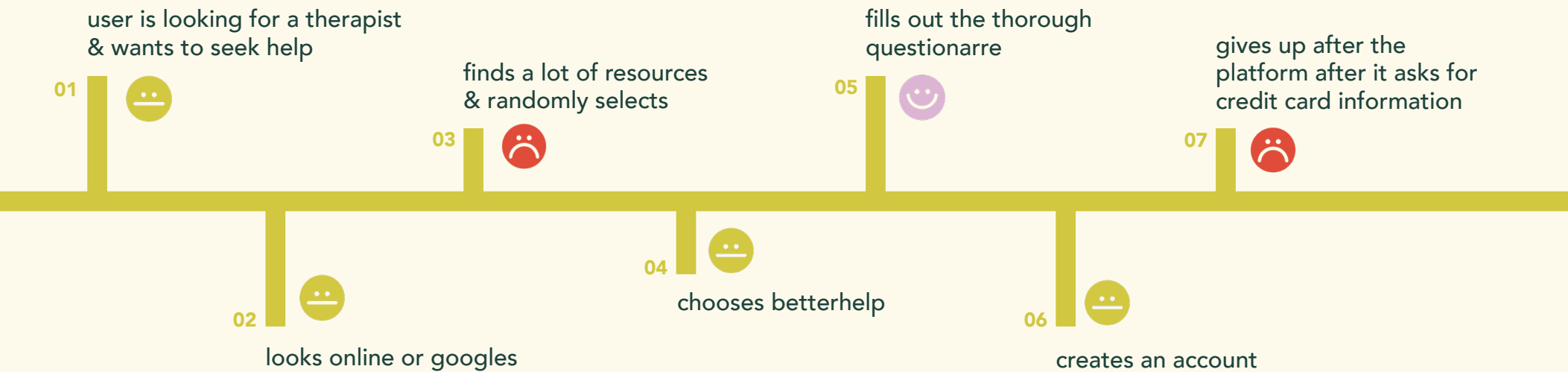
The state of the world today is causing more stress than normal. **With the rise of COVID-19, more people are struggling and seeking help.**





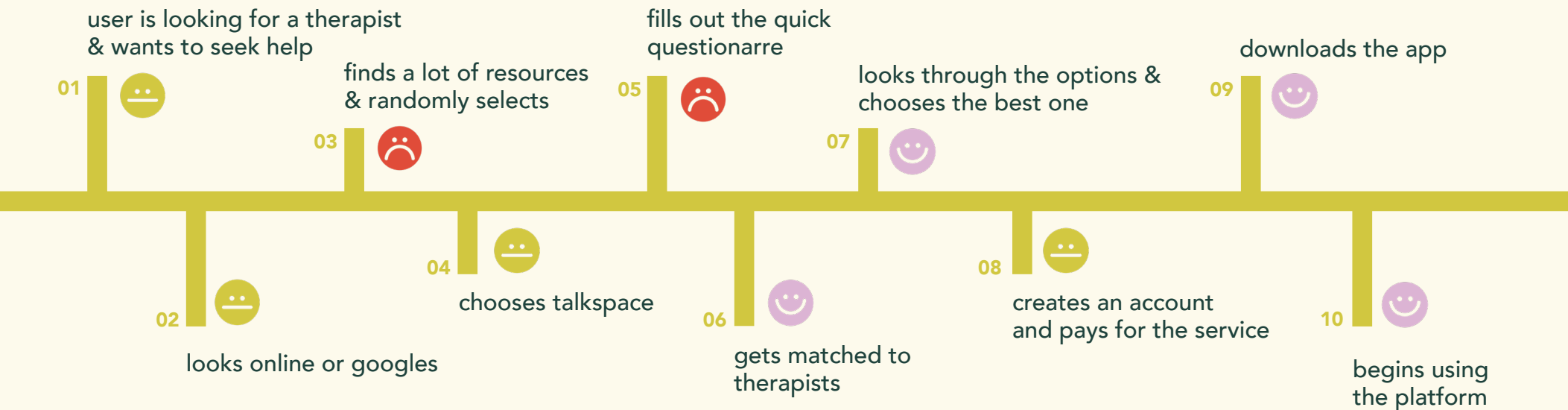
# current user journey

betterhelp



# current user journey

talkspace



## MEDIA SCAN INSIGHTS

**01** thorough but quick questionnaire

**02** quiz **focuses on issues & what someone is looking for out of a therapist**

**03** give therapist **options before asking for payment**

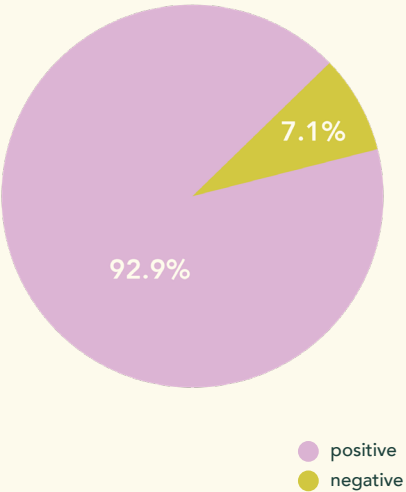
**04** inclusive audience

**05** non-judemental approach

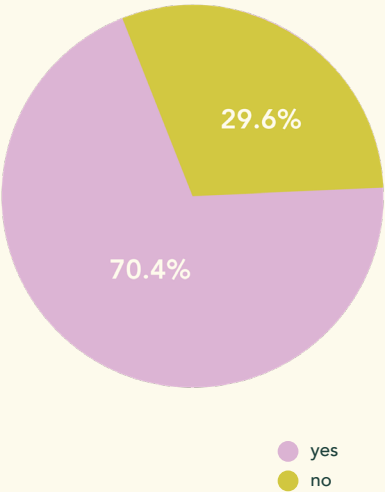
**06** resource statement about where to get **immediate help**

survey results

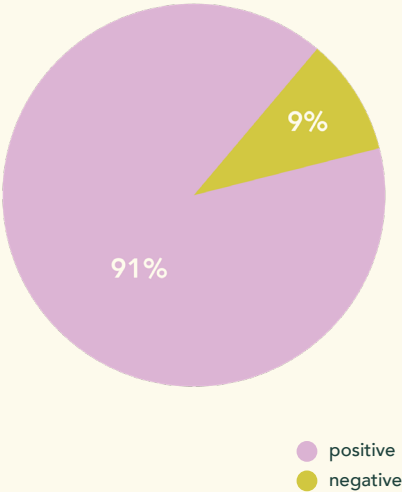
Do you typically think of therapy as something that is positive or negative?



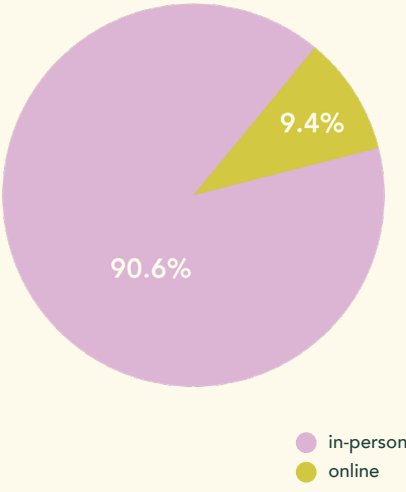
Have you ever done any type of therapy or counseling?



If so, was your experience positive or negative?



Would you rather go to therapy if it was in-person or online?



What do you think of when someone mentions they go to therapy?

93  
responses

If positive, can you explain why you had a positive experience?

68  
responses

If negative, can you explain why you had a negative experience?

21  
responses

What would stop you from going to therapy?

90  
responses

## SURVEY INSIGHTS

**01** most people view therapy as a positive experience

**02** most people **have been to some sort of counseling**

**03** people had negative experiences because they felt **uncomfortable and didn't connect with their therapist**

**04** people had positive experiences because they had a **good and open relationship with their therapist**

**05** people don't go to therapy because of the **lack of accessibility** and the **high cost** of therapy

## INTERVIEW INSIGHTS

not experienced with therapy

**01** therapy is **currently seen as a positive** but has been seen as a **negative in the past**

**02** they would not consider therapy because of **money, accessibility, and not knowing where to start**

**03** would prefer to go to **therapy in-person**

**04** would want a **platform that finds similarities between the users and the therapists and therapist bios**

## INTERVIEW INSIGHTS

experienced with therapy

**01** prefer in-person but would try online therapy

**02** without recommendations, it is hard to find a good therapist

**03** had negative experiences because they felt **uncomfortable and weren't helped in the right way**

**04** had positive experiences because they had a **friendship and similarities between them and their therapist**

**05** would want a platform to include **immediate help, therapist bios, mental health resources, daily mood tracker, matching in the area, and easy insurance payment**



## INTERVIEW INSIGHTS

licensed therapists

**01** their needs to be a **sense of trust between a therapist and their client**

**02** what creates success for the client is their **therapist getting to know them on a personal value to learn their goals and values**

**03** online therapy is great for accessibility but is not as effective as in-person therapy

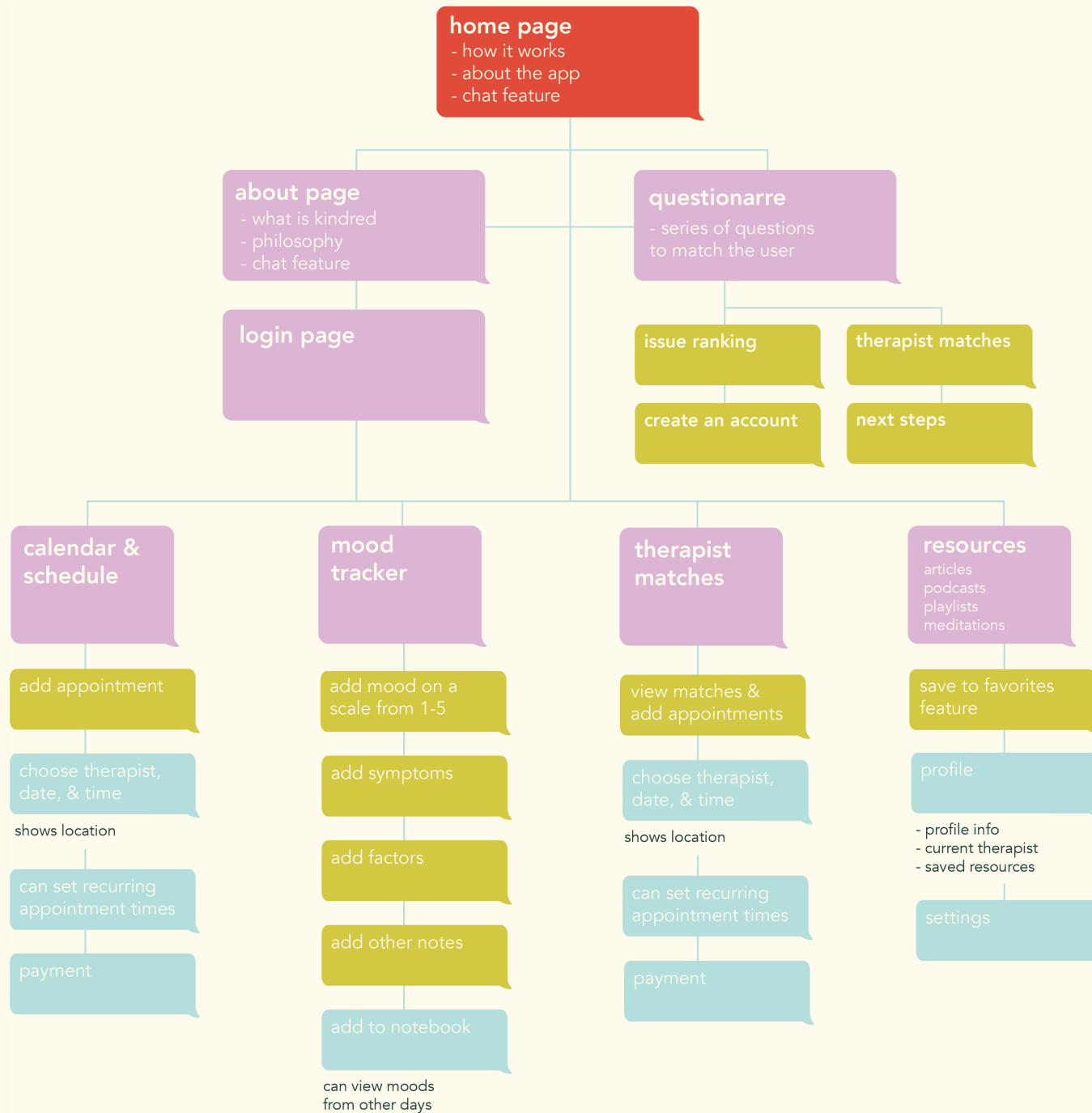
**04** would want a platform to include a **mood tracker**

# design oportunities

After completing this initial research, I decided to create an app, website, and wellness journal. I then completed a user journey, site map, and wireframes for the app and website.

## user journey

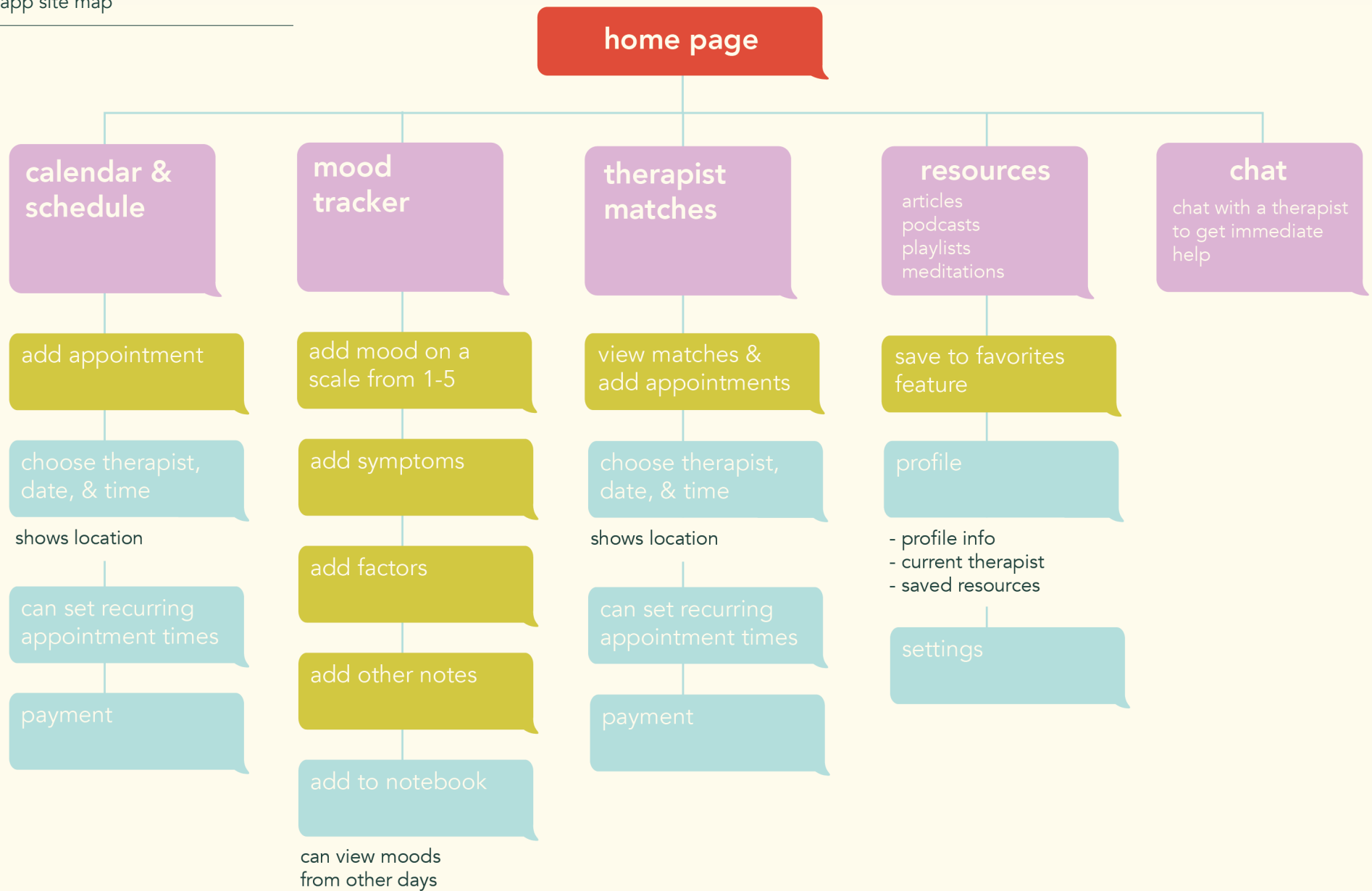




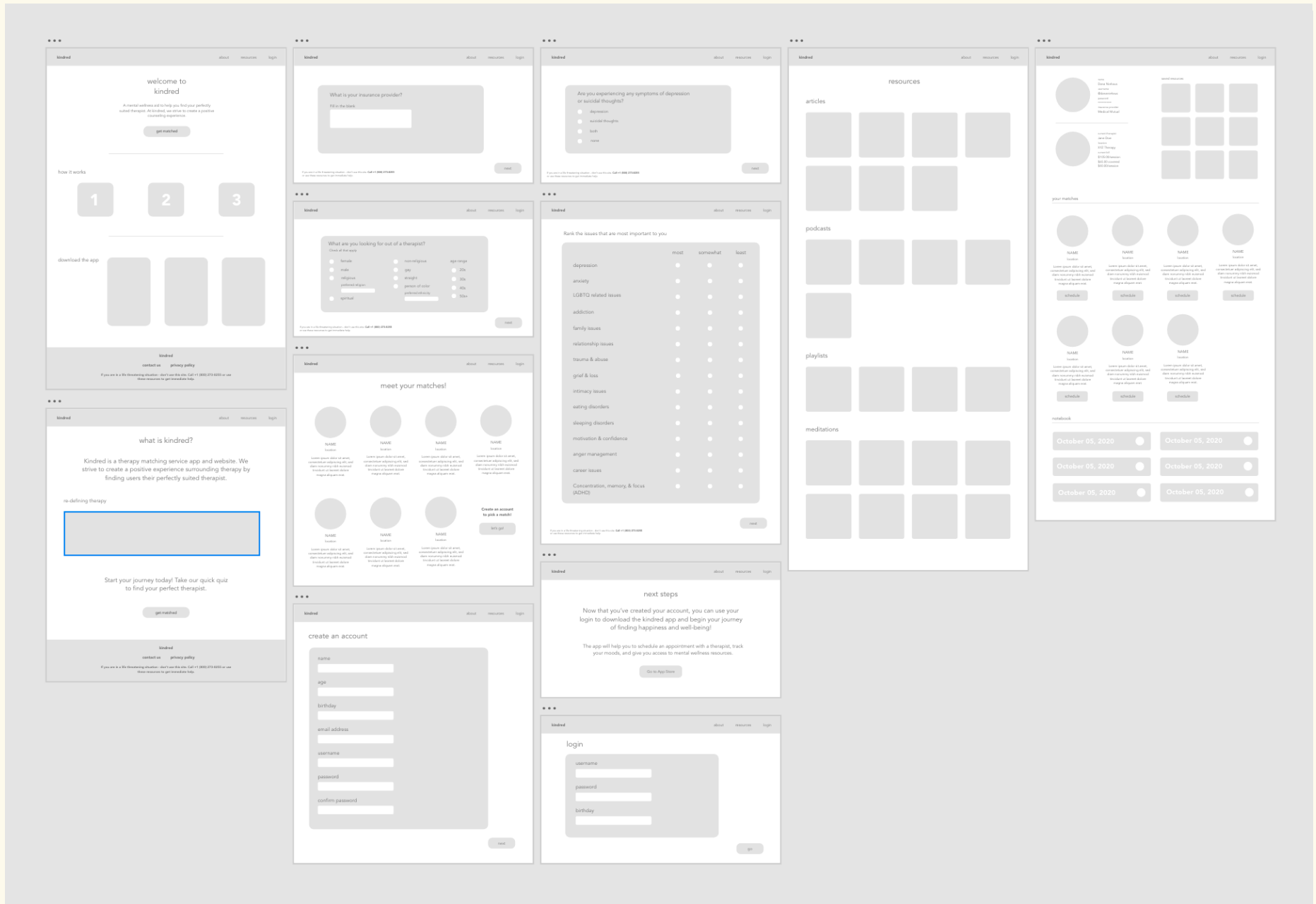
## SITE MAP

website pages and features.

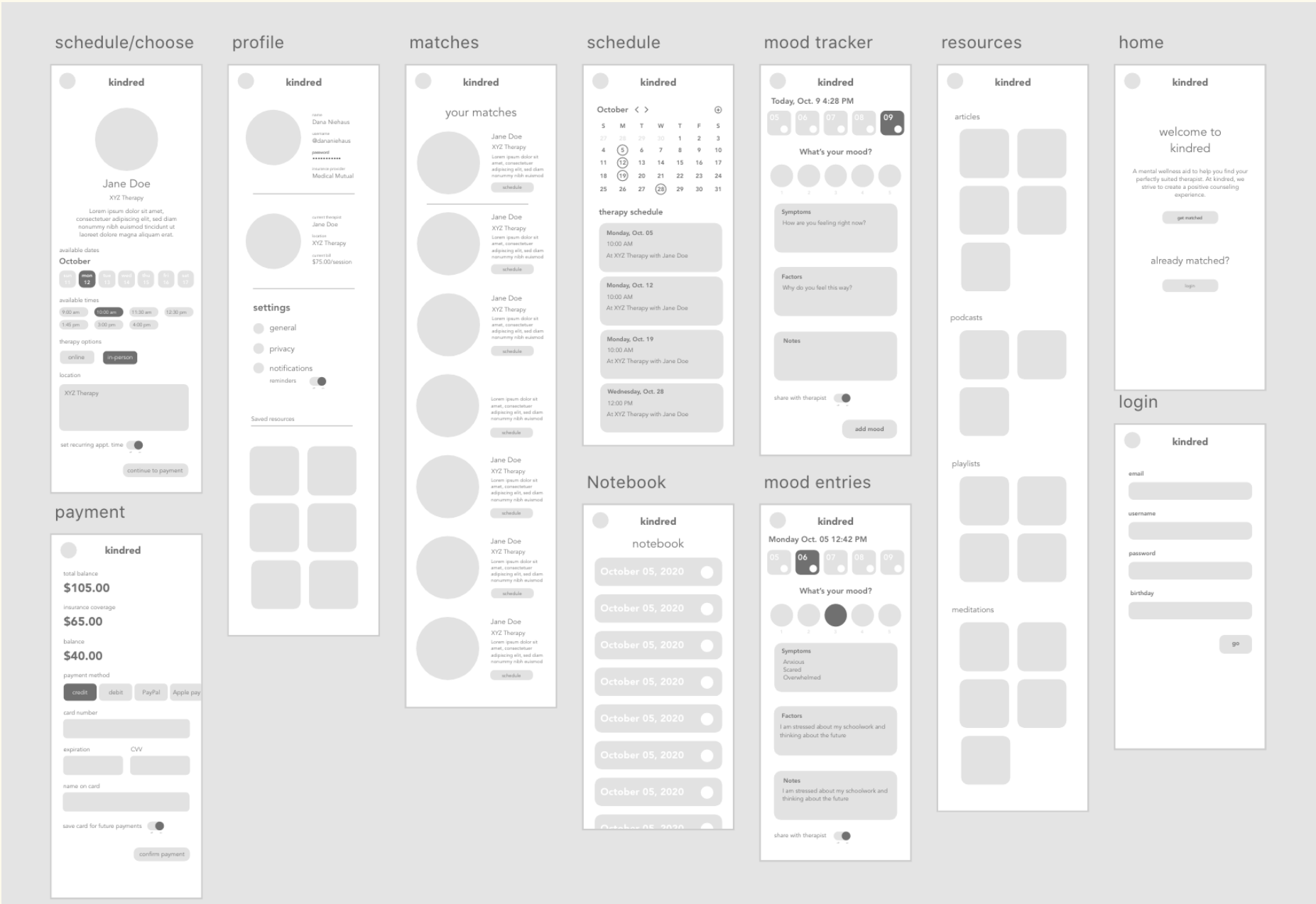
## app site map



website wireframes



app wireframes



# design solution

01 brand strategy

02 website

03 app

04 wellness journal



## logo

# kindred

WELLNESS SUPPORT

## type

avenir

## HEADER

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel eum iriure dolor in hendrerit in vulputate velit esse molestie consequat, vel.

## wordmarks

kindred

kindred

kindred

kindred

kindred

## smileys



## color palette

acceptance



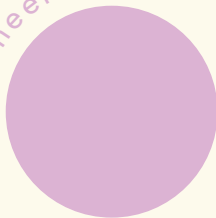
#29413D

joy



#D1C859

cheer



#D5B5D2

love



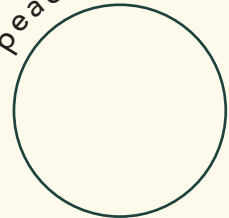
#CE5642

serenity



#BBDBDA

peace



#FDF9EB

graphic bubbles

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graphic

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be kind to  
yourself

pattern

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navigation icons



systematic icons



mood icons



resource icons



user profile picture



therapist profile pictures



kindred wellness products

canvas tote



patterned mask

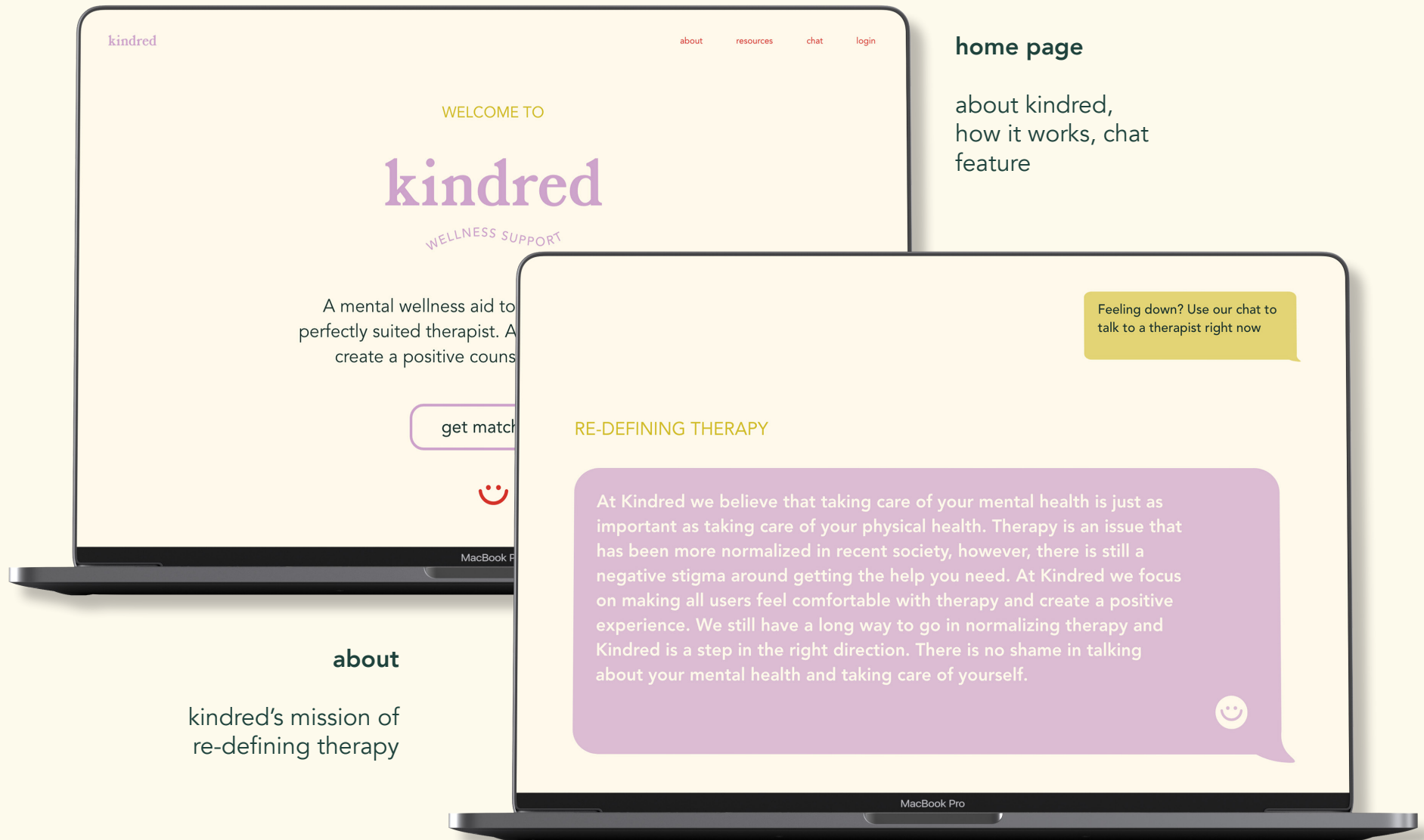


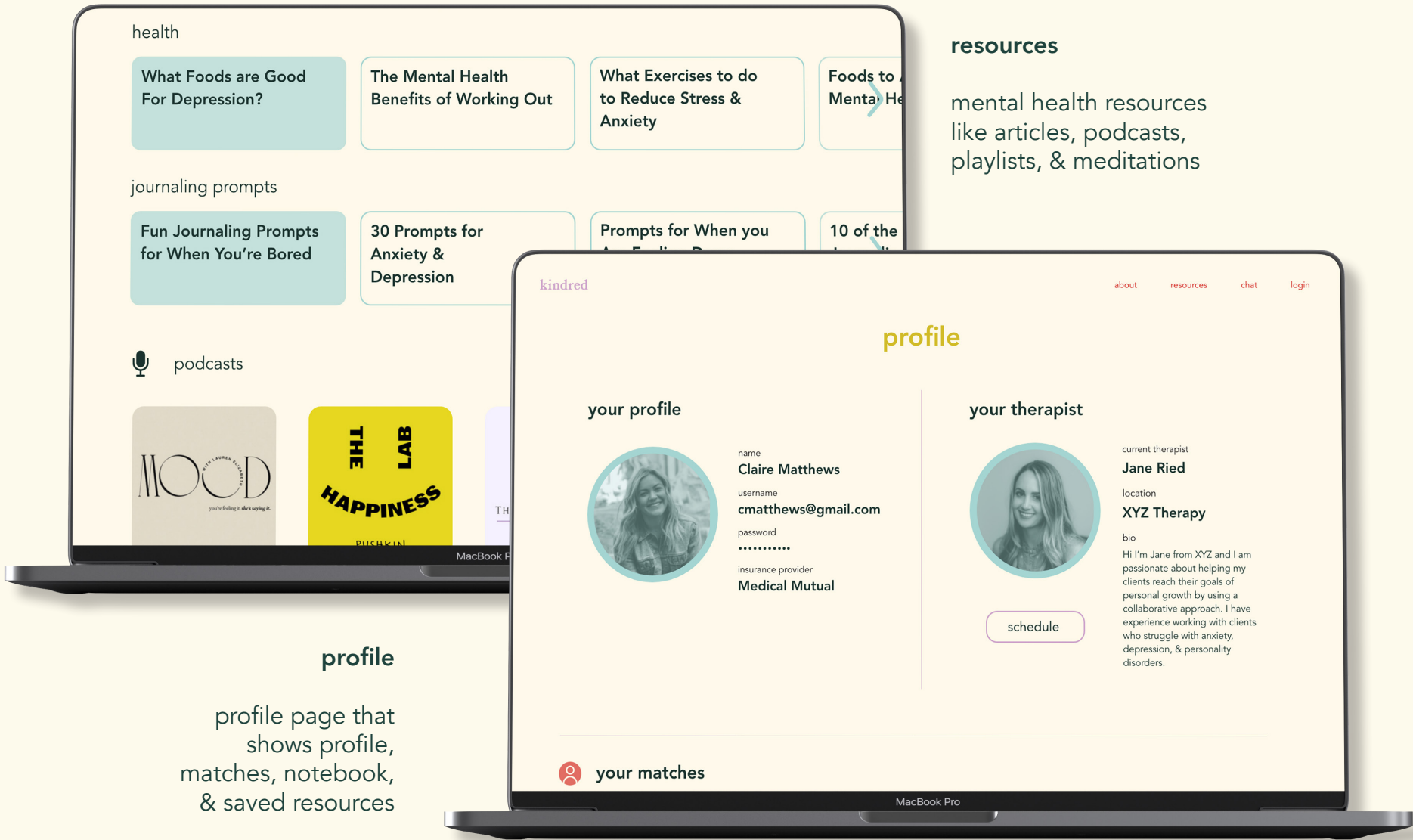
mug



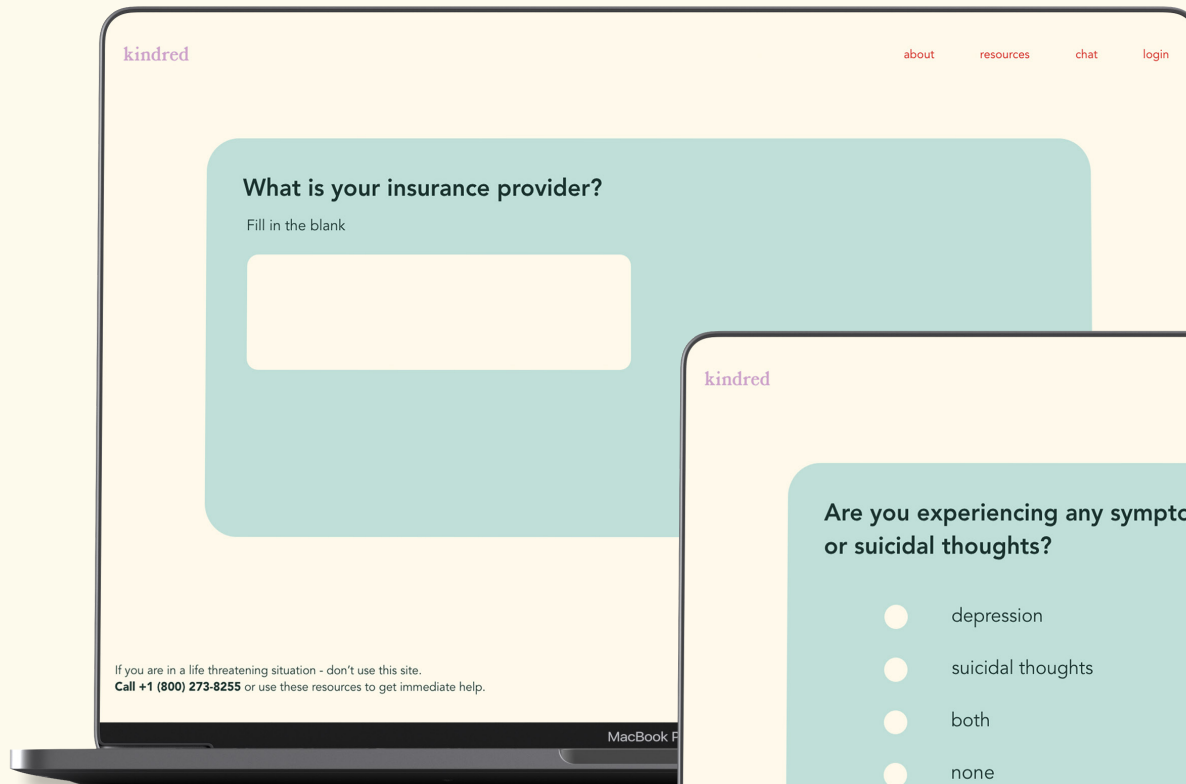
candle





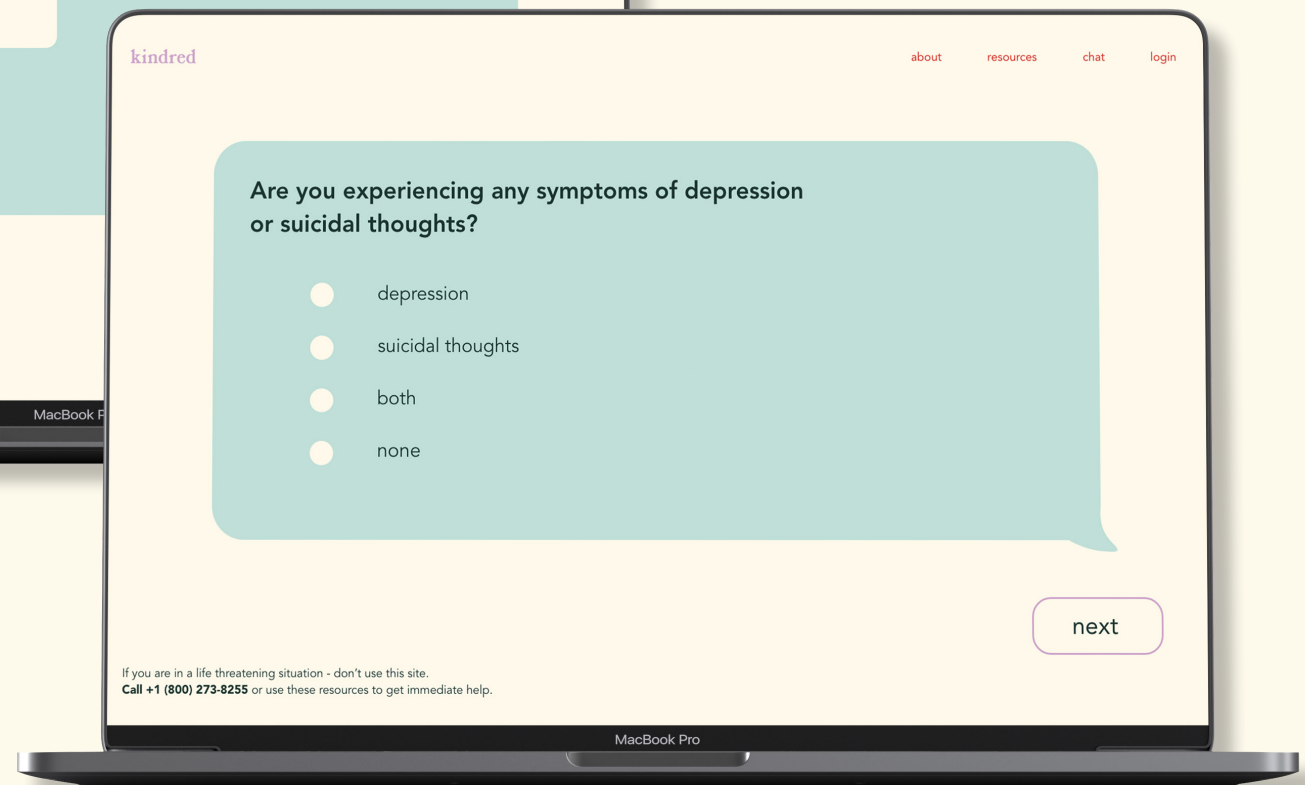






## questionnaire

asks for insurance to make sure user's insurance is compatible with their matches



## questionnaire

focuses on certain issues for kindred to match user's with the best therapist

The image shows a laptop screen with the Kindred website interface. The header includes the 'kindred' logo and navigation links for 'about', 'resources', 'chat', and 'login'. The main content area features a questionnaire titled 'What are you looking for out of a therapist?' with the instruction 'Check all that apply'. The questionnaire is organized into three columns of radio button options. The first column lists gender ('female', 'male'), religious status ('religious', 'spiritual'), and a 'preferred religion' text input field. The second column lists sexual orientation ('non-religious', 'gay', 'straight', 'person of color') and a 'preferred ethnicity' text input field. The third column is labeled 'age range' and includes options for '20s', '30s', '40s', and '50s+'. A 'next' button is positioned at the bottom right of the questionnaire. At the bottom of the screen, a disclaimer states: 'If you are in a life threatening situation - don't use this site. Call +1 (800) 273-8255 or use these resources to get immediate help.'

kindred

about resources chat login

### What are you looking for out of a therapist?

Check all that apply

<input type="radio"/> female	<input type="radio"/> non-religious	age range
<input type="radio"/> male	<input type="radio"/> gay	<input type="radio"/> 20s
<input type="radio"/> religious	<input type="radio"/> straight	<input type="radio"/> 30s
preferred religion <input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/> person of color	<input type="radio"/> 40s
<input type="radio"/> spiritual	preferred ethnicity <input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/> 50s+

next

If you are in a life threatening situation - don't use this site.  
Call +1 (800) 273-8255 or use these resources to get immediate help.

MacBook Pro

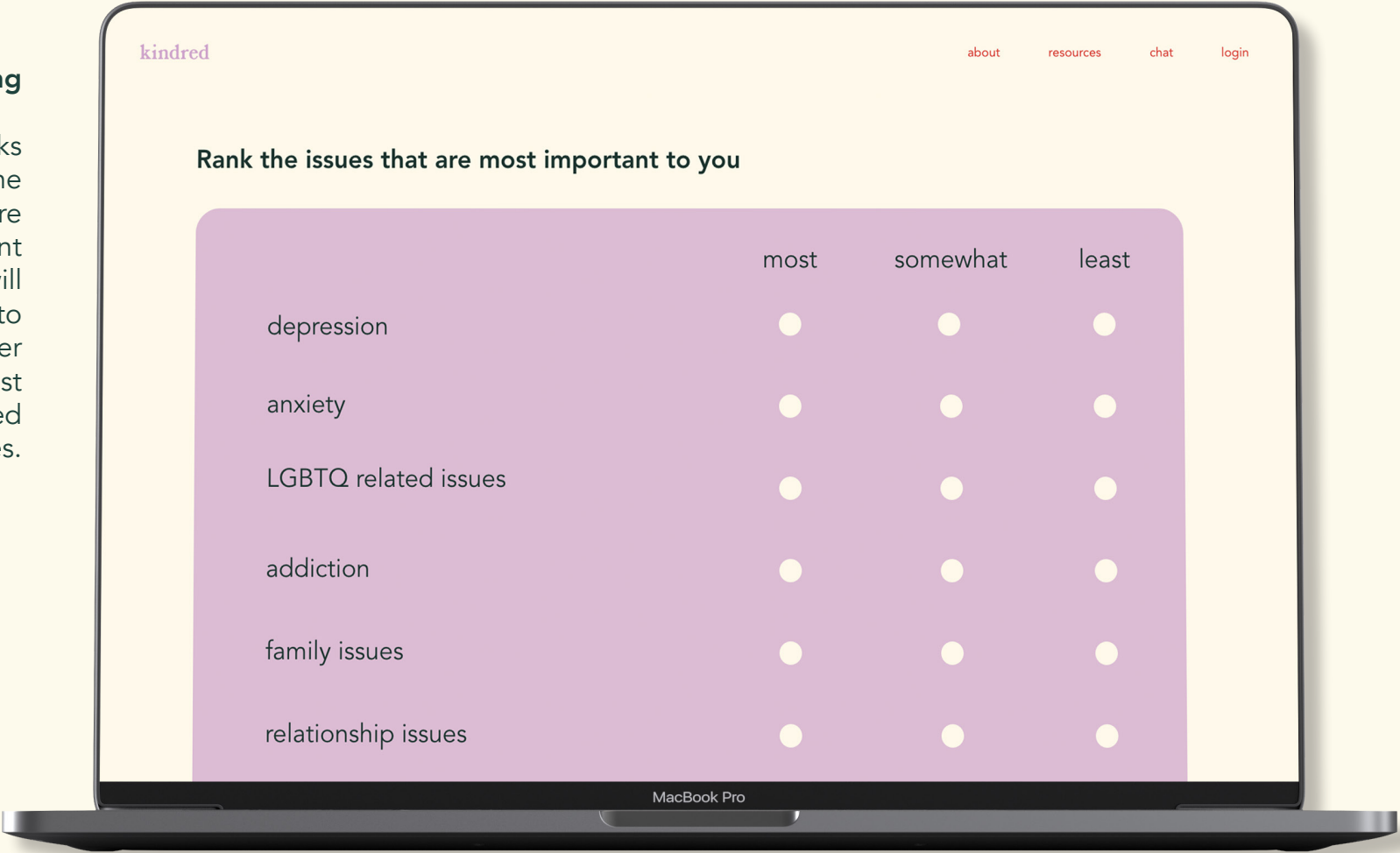
## questionnaire

one of the many questions to get to know the users. this question asks the users what they are looking for out of a therapist.

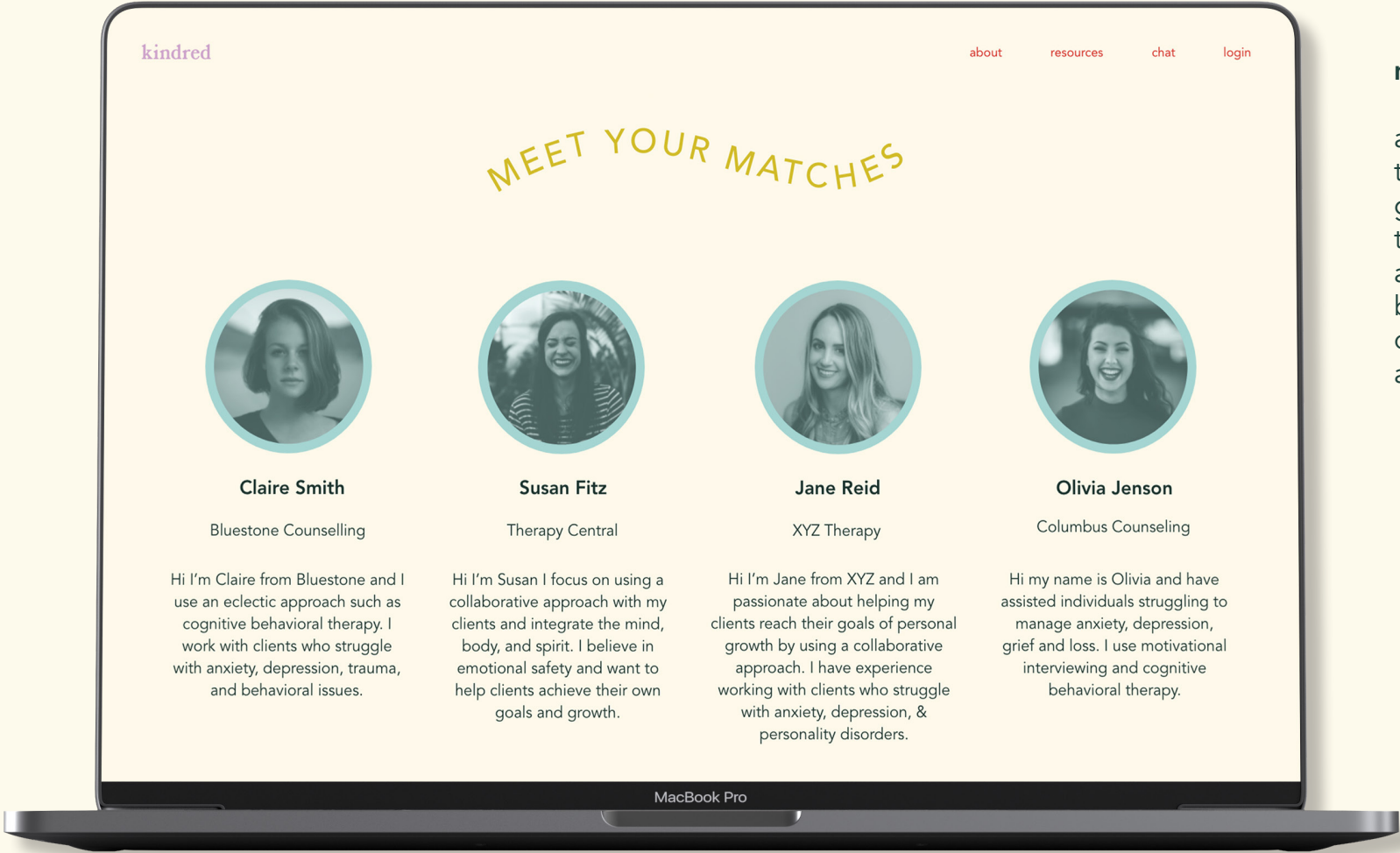


ranking

this page asks users to rank the issues that are most important to them. this will allow kindred to match the user with a therapist that is specialized with these issues.

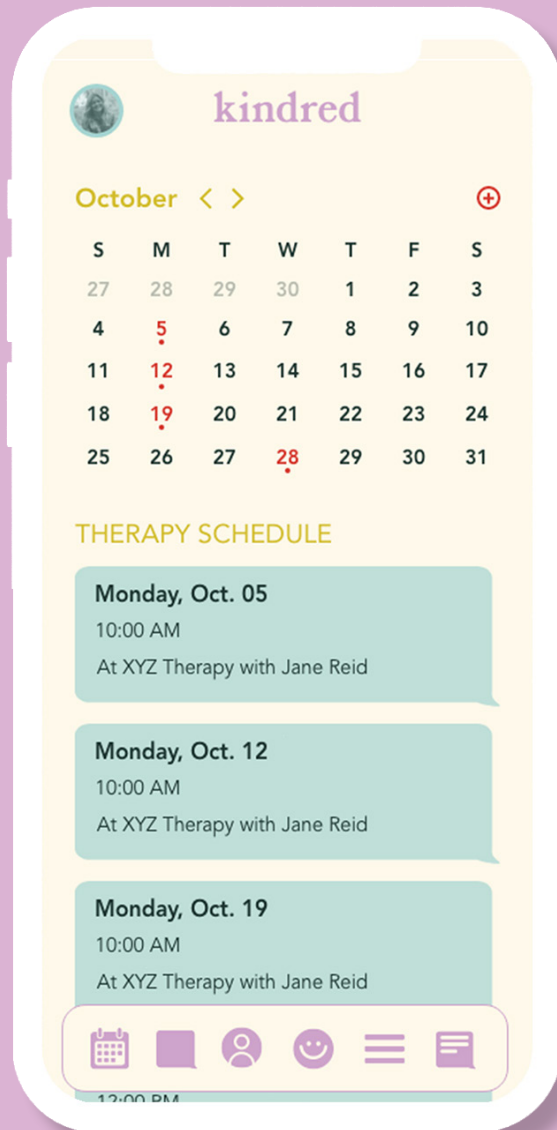






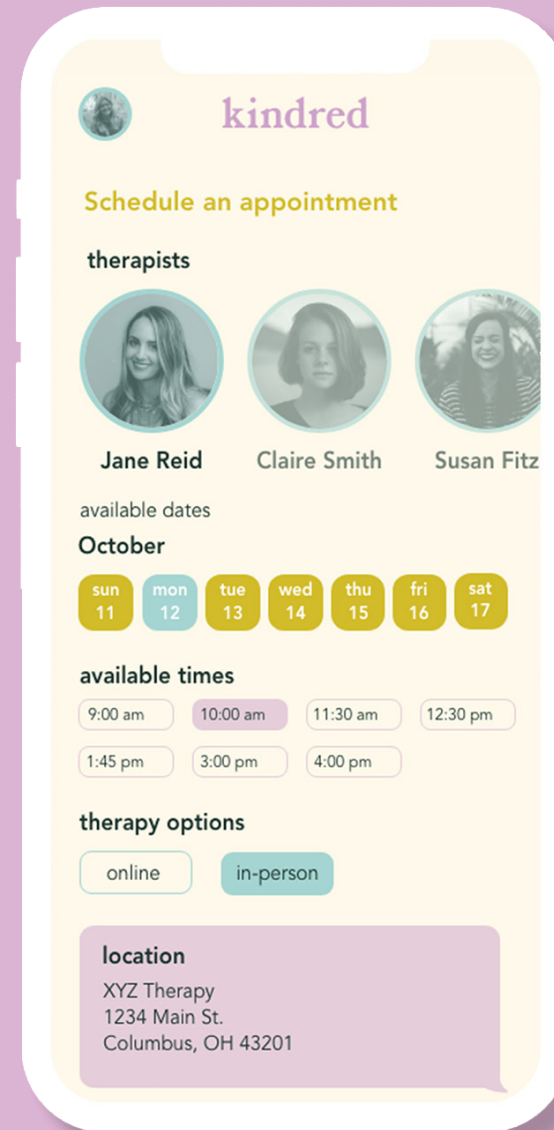
matches

after users take the quiz, they will get their matches to browse through and choose from before paying or creating an account.



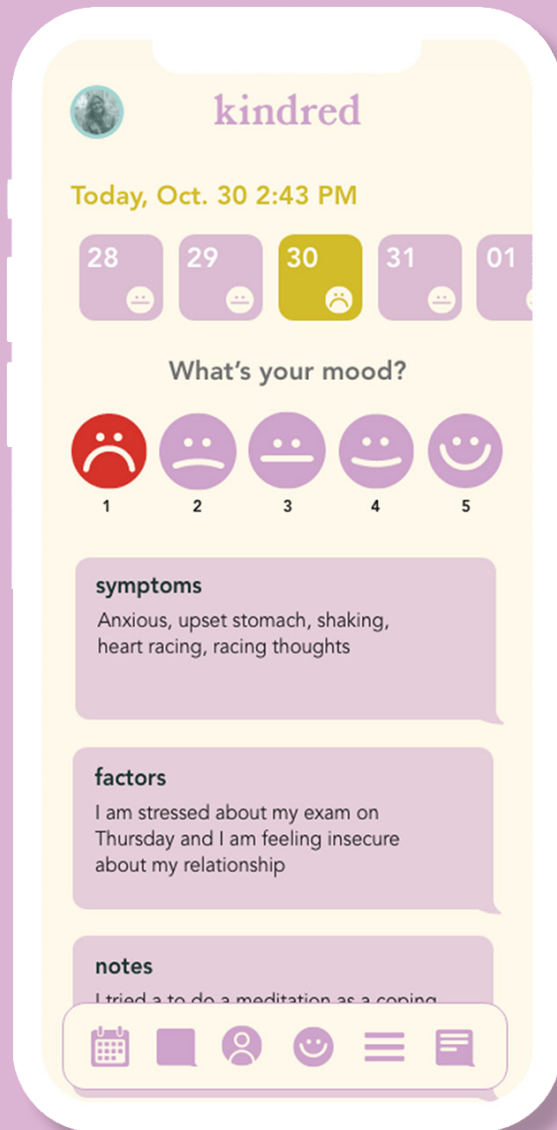
### home page - calendar

users can look at  
their upcoming  
appointments and  
add new ones



### scheduling

users can choose  
their therapist,  
appointment  
time & date,  
and whether the  
appointment will  
be online or  
in-person



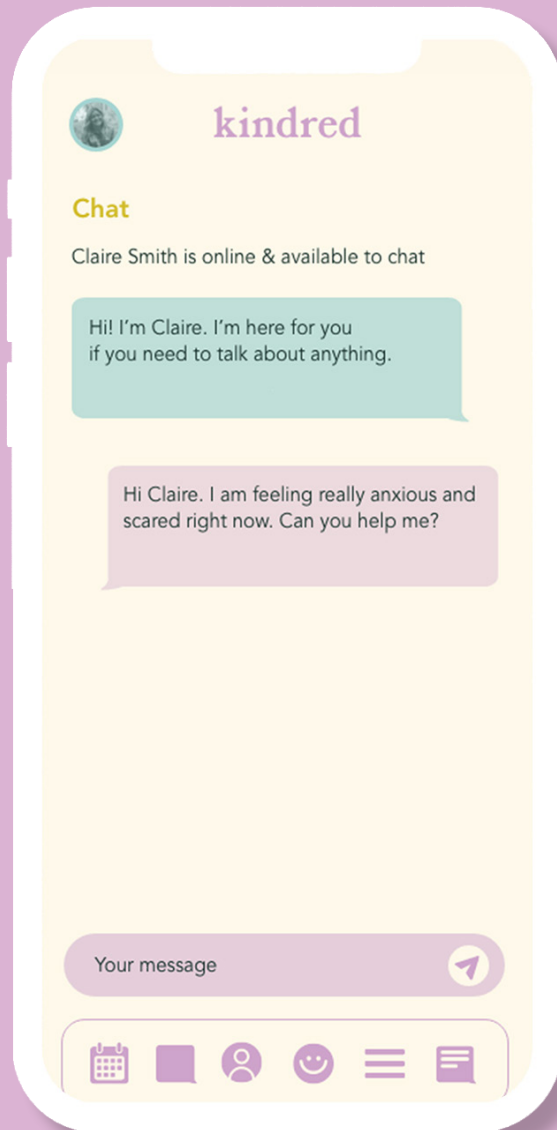
### mood tracker

users can track their moods by choosing a smiley to match their feelings, track their symptoms, factors, and other notes. these moods can be shared with the user's therapist.



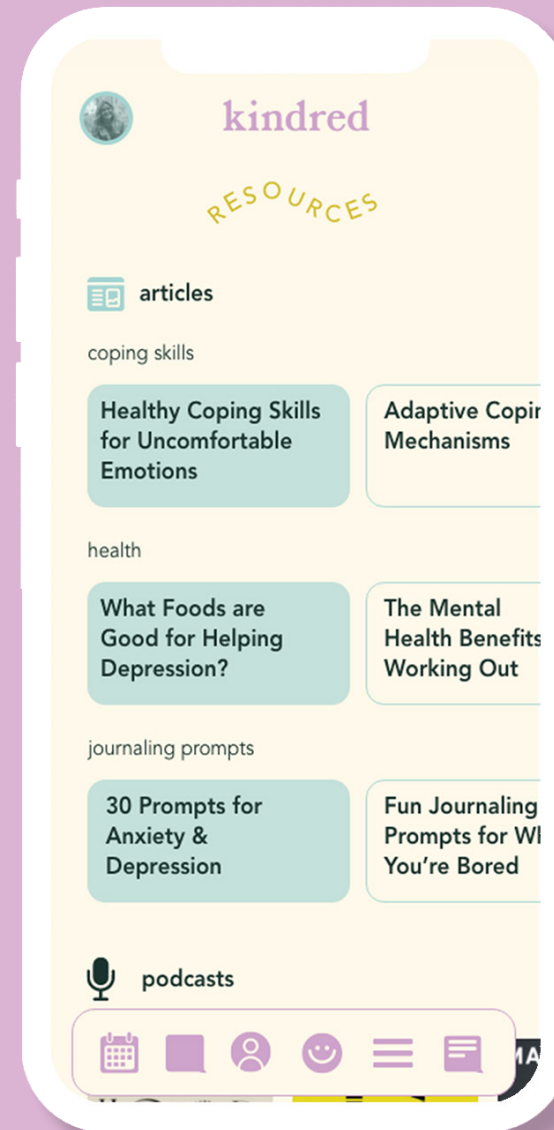
### notebook

users can save their past moods to their notebook to look back on and track their progress



## chat

therapists can be online on the kindred app to offer users immediate support



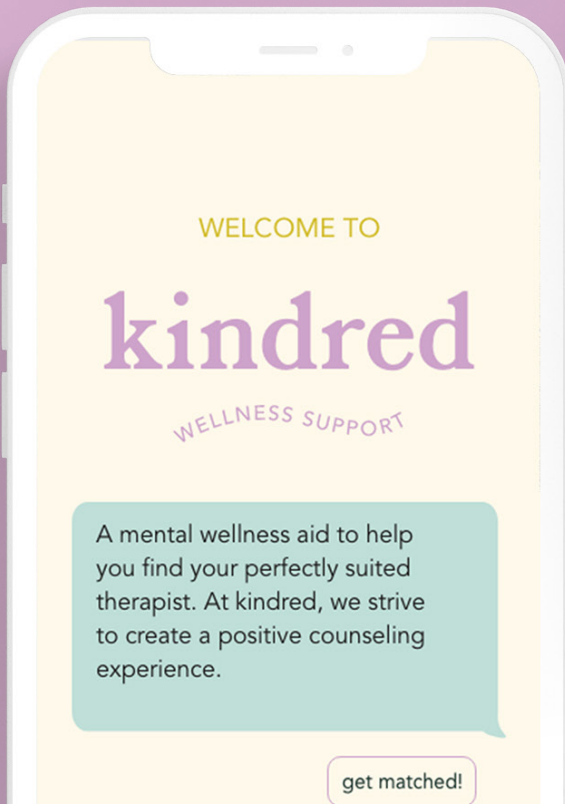
## resources

users can browse through articles, podcasts, playlists, and meditations that support positive mental health. users can save their favorites to look back on.

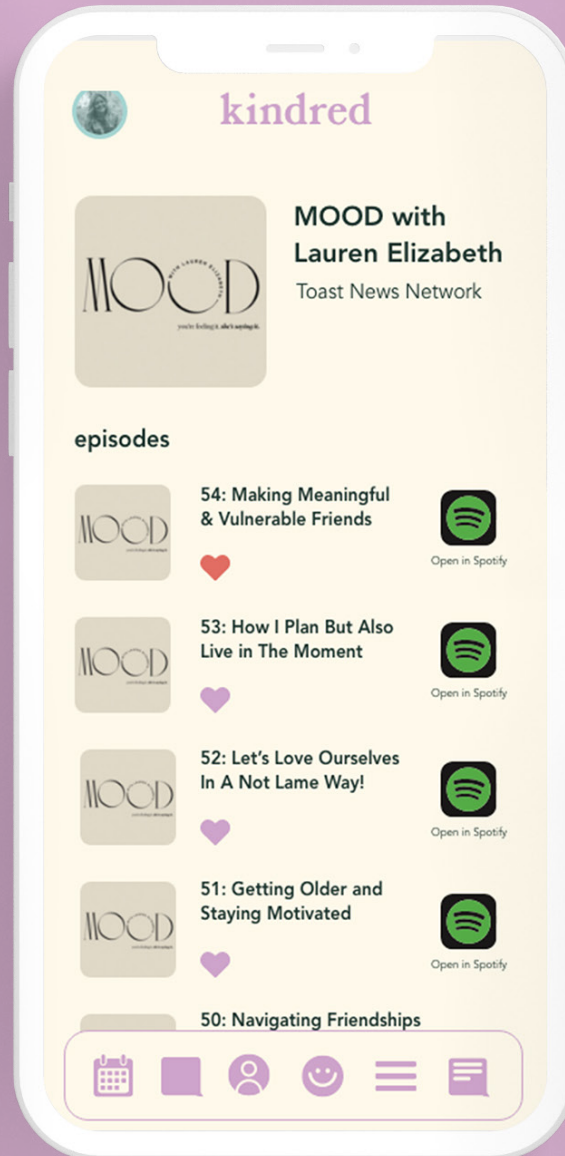




graphic page



opening page



save podcasts



pattern



online appointment

\$40.00

payment method

credit debit PayPal Apple pay

card number

expiration CVV

name on card

save card for future payments ☒

payment

settings

general

notifications

reminder ☒

favorite resources

articles

Healthy Coping Skills for Uncomfortable Emotions

How Pets Help Reduce Anxiety

podcasts

MOOD with Lauren Elizabeth

The Science of Happiness

Master Health

profile page

email

username

password

birthday

login

login

chat

kindred

Chat

Claire Smith is online & available to chat

Hi! I'm Claire. I'm here for you if you need to talk about anything.

in person appointment

kindred

Appointment details

Monday, Oct. 05

10:00 AM

At XYZ Therapy with Jane Reid

XYZ Therapy  
1234 Main St.  
Columbus, OH 43201

get directions





# research distinction

For my research distinction project, I decided to focus on researching journaling and its benefits. I completed secondary and primary research to learn about how journaling can improve mental and physical health. I completed general research, a media scan, and a survey for the secondary research. For my primary research, I completed 5 surveys of people who journal, don't journal, and with a licensed therapist.

## SECONDARY RESEARCH

### Benefits of journaling:

- can improve depression & anxiety
  - form of CBT
- overall boost mood and happiness
- improve self-awareness
- can help in trauma recovery
- can help manage stress
- gratitude journaling
  - can improve personal growth and goals

## SECONDARY RESEARCH

### Physical benefits of journaling:

- improves memory
- reduces stress
  - lowers blood pressure & increases liver functionality
- improves immune function
  - improves lung health
  - decreased risk of illness

# MEDIA SCAN - The Anti-Anxiety Notebook

## about

Designed by therapists, the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)-based notebook entries are made to help you track your emotions, become more aware of thought patterns, and grow over time specifically to reduce anxiety and manage stress.

## what's helping

- 100 journal entries
- structured exercises
- anxiety "check in's"
- notes from therapists
- 270 guided entries
- backed by professionals

## what's hurting

- could be overwhelming



# MEDIA SCAN - My Wellness Journal

## about

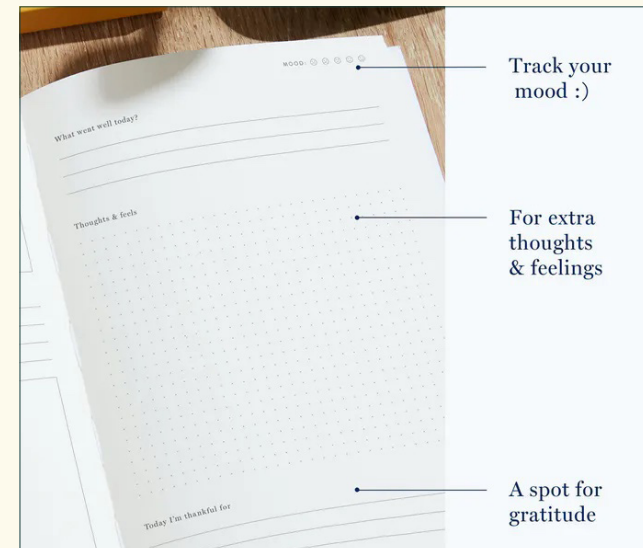
This year's been a little different to say the least – make time for yourself with our daily wellness journal. Start and end your day with a fresh mindset, set intentions and take note of the things that make you feel good. There are 12-weeks of pages for reflecting on your mindful goals, habits, meals, water intake, sleep and the things you're grateful for.

## what's helping

- 3 open ended pages
- gratitude
- reflection
- undated
- quotes & words to remember

## what's hurting

- water and food tracking
- not backed by professionals



# MEDIA SCAN - Michelle Obama Becoming: Guided Journal

## about

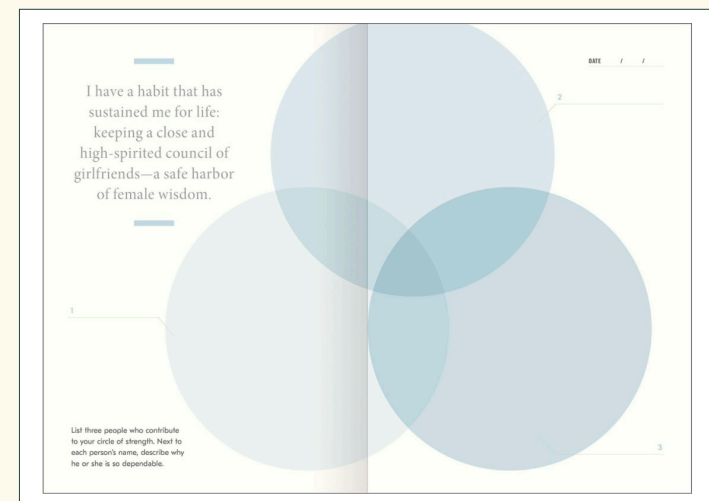
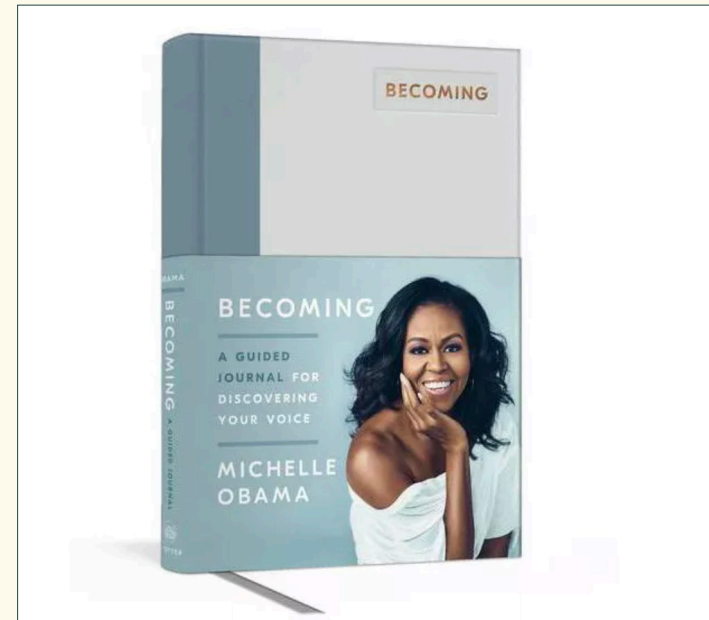
These pages will help you capture your own voice and journey so you can nurture your sense of belonging. Inside, you'll find an opportunity not only to take heart in the experiences that brought you to where you are today, but also to feel empowered to take those next steps, wherever they might lead.

## what's helping

- quotes
- 208 prompts
- people & experience reflection
- backed by trusted, Michelle Obama
- based on research

## what's hurting

- not everyday
- could be too open ended



# MEDIA SCAN - The Five Minute Journal

## about

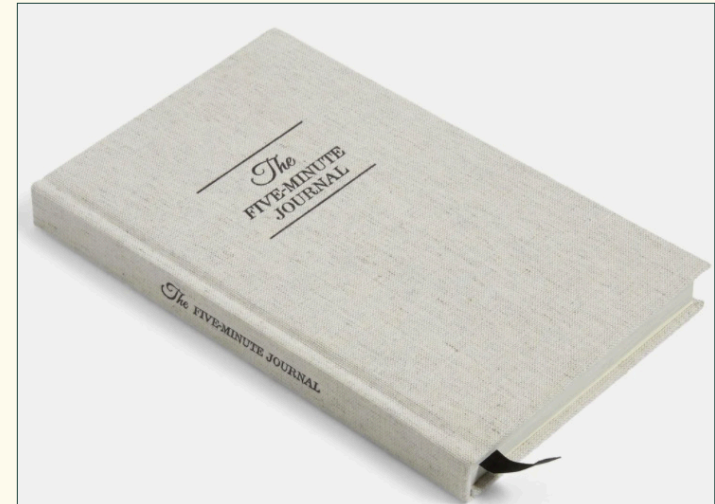
The Five Minute Journal is your secret weapon to focus on the good in your life, become more mindful, and live with intention. With a simple structured format based on positive psychology research, you will start and end each day with gratitude. 500,000+ who use the journal have seen increased happiness, better relationships, and have become more optimistic.

## what's helping

- every morning & night
- promotes consistency
- quotes
- quick & convenient

## what's hurting

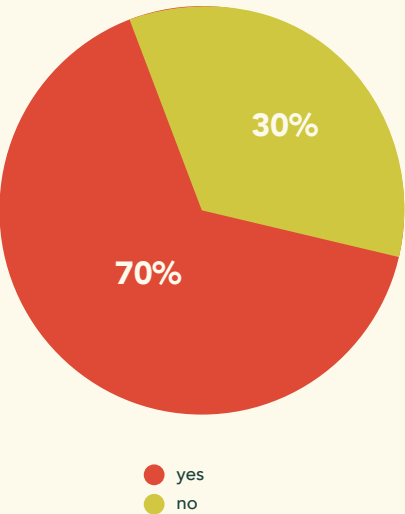
- everyday could be overwhelming
- could be too simple



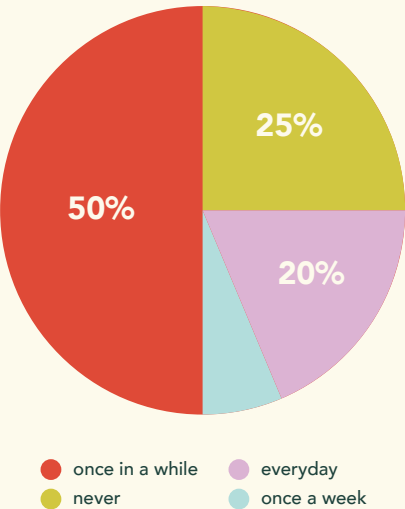


survey results based on 20 responses

Do you journal?



If so, how often do you journal?



What do you like about journaling?

17  
responses

What is one of your favorite journaling prompts?

16  
responses

If you don't journal, why not?

9  
responses

If you don't journal, what would entice you to start journaling?

10  
responses

## SURVEY INSIGHTS

**01** most people journal often

**02** most people like journaling to write down their emotions and reflect on their lives

**03** people like open ended prompts and gratitude prompts

**04** people feel too busy to journal

**05** people would start journaling if there were fun prompts and it was less of a time commitment

## INTERVIEW INSIGHTS

people who journal

**01** they journal everyday or multiple times a week

**02** they journal about their **daily lives** and **typically don't use prompts**

**03** are open to **prompts** and **think they are a cool idea**

**04** likes journaling as a **reflective practice**

**05** likes journaling to be able to **look back on the past**

## INTERVIEW INSIGHTS

people who don't journal

**01** doesn't journal because of time constraints or improved mental health

**02** journaling has been **recommended by a therapist**

**03** would only journal if it was a **priority and if there were prompts**

**04** prompts could make journaling more meaningful

**05** would enjoy **fun prompts that didn't just talk about the negative in life**

## INTERVIEW INSIGHTS

licensed therapist

**01** how often someone journals depends on the person

**02** recommends journaling as a **form of self care**

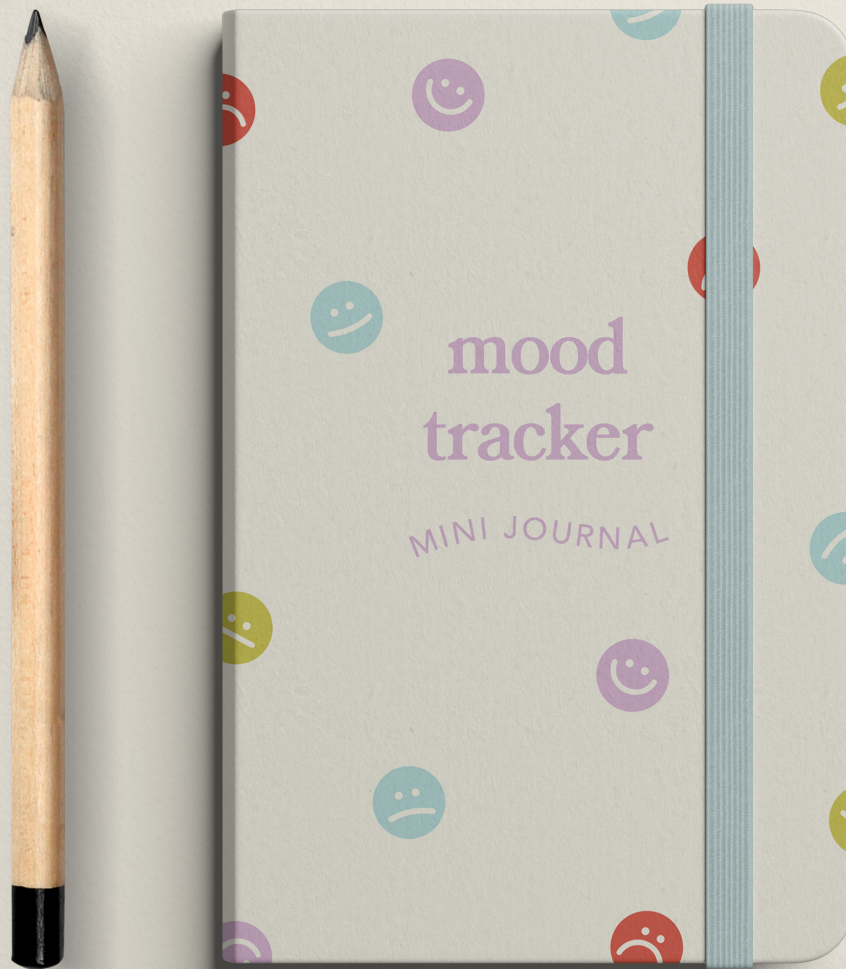
**03** their clients have given them **positive feedback about journaling and how it has helped them**

**04** gratitude prompts can help with depression

**05** **daily, weekly, or monthly goals** would be helpful to include in a therapy journal

# final journals

After my research, I expanded further on the Kindred Wellness Journal to create two journals. One is a mood tracker that can be taken on the go, and one is a larger journal with prompts that focus on presence, reflection, growth, and fun.

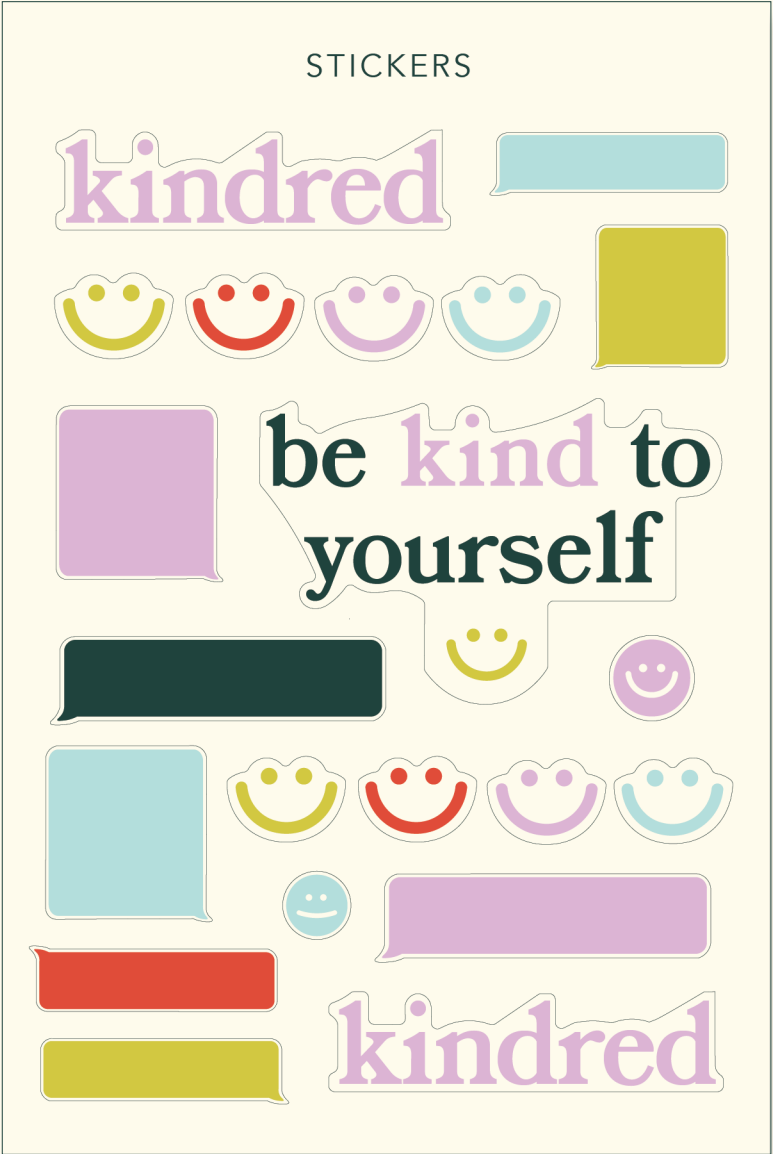


dimensions 4 x 6 in

## mini journal

### MOOD TRACKER

The Kindred Mini Journal allows users to document their moods in a more tangible way. This journal directly relates to the mood tracking feature on the app but in a journaling form. This journal also includes two sticker pages for users to decorate their pages.





what's your mood?

today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

fill in the smiley that matches your mood:



symptoms:  
track how you are feeling

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

factors:  
why are you feeling this way?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

notes

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

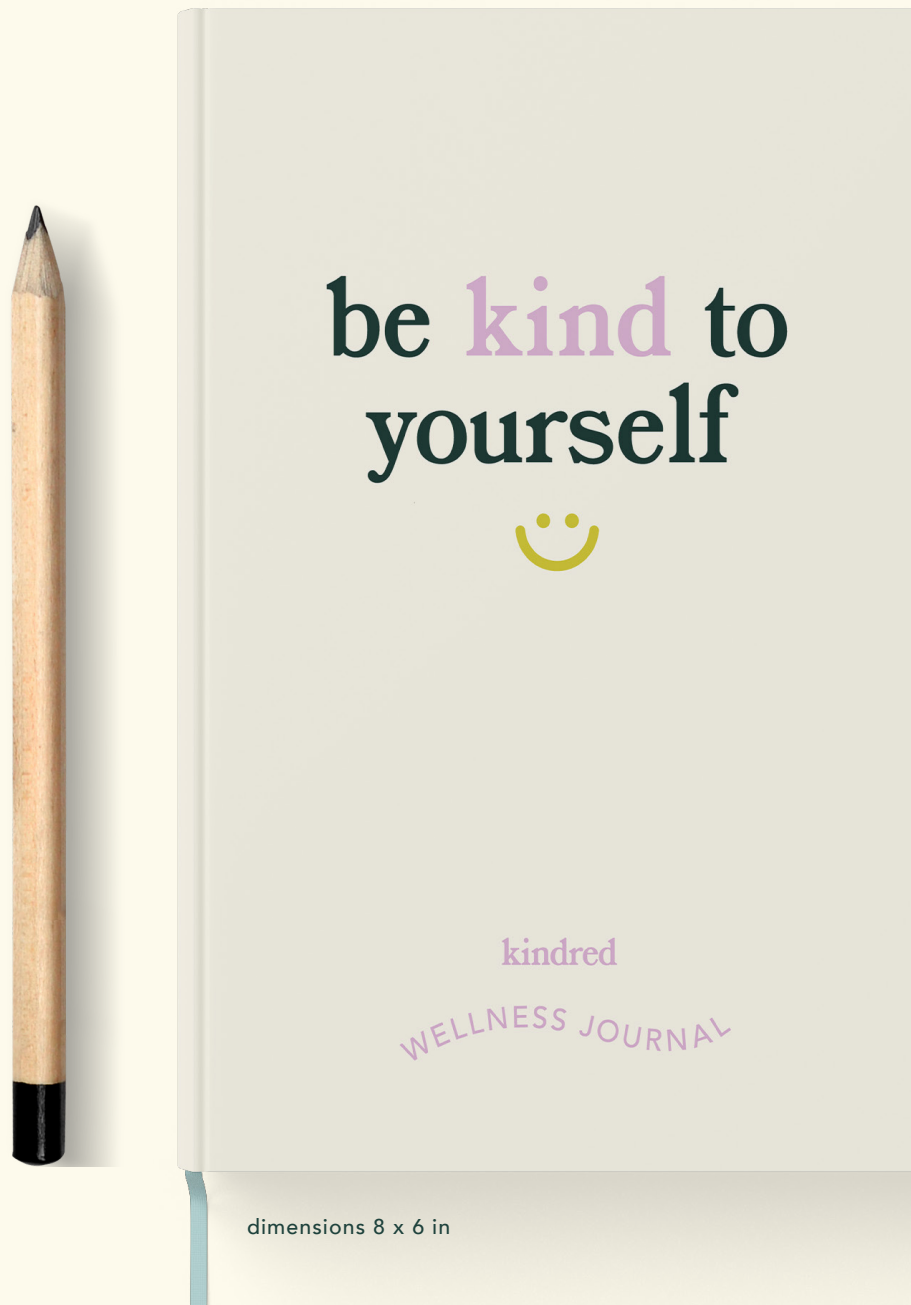
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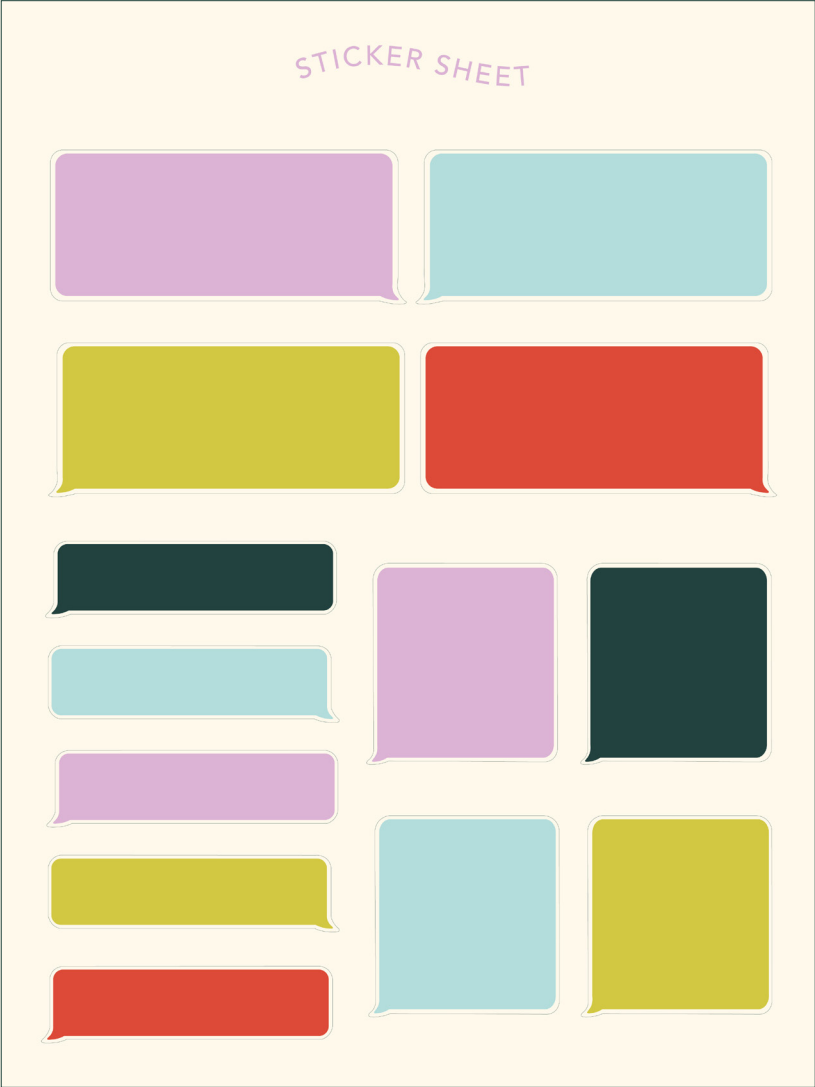
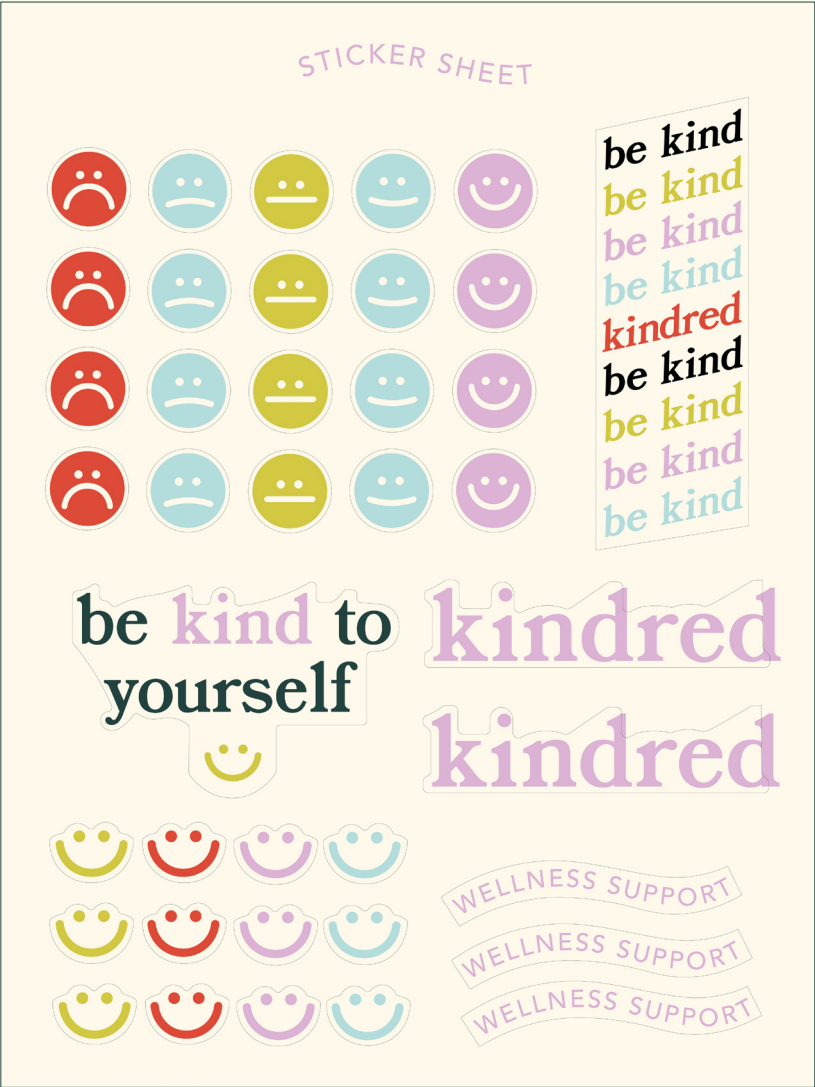
\_\_\_\_\_

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## wellness journal

The Kindred Wellness Journal is another tangible approach to improve mental health. This journal is split into four sections and include prompts that relate to presence, reflection, growth, and having fun. Hopefully this journal will spark joy for its users and help them on their wellness journey.



# presence

DO NOT DWELL IN THE PAST, DO NOT  
DREAM OF THE FUTURE, CONCENTRATE  
THE MIND ON THE PRESENT MOMENT.  
- BUDDHA

use these prompts to feel connected  
to the present moment and learn to  
live in the moment.



presence \_\_\_\_\_

what is one thing you can do today to improve yourself?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

who are you grateful for today?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

what do you need to let go of today?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## PROMPTS: PRESENCE

- What went well today?
- What went poorly today? How can you change that for tomorrow?
- Daily goals.
- Gratitude
- What are you grateful for today?
- Who are you grateful for today?
- Write what's on your mind?
- What do I need to let go of today?
- What does your ideal day look like?
- What can I do to make myself happy today?
- What is one thing you can do today to improve yourself?

# reflection

THE REAL MAN SMILES IN TROUBLE,  
GATHERS STRENGTH FROM DISTRESS,  
AND GROWS BRAVE BY REFLECTION.  
- THOMAS PAINE

use these prompts to reflect on your  
life and learn to love yourself.



reflection

list the three main people who have shaped who you are.

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---

who are the people in your life that you turn to in times of need?  
of joy? of sadness? of excitement?

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---

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---

---

what is one person holding you back from living your best life?

---

---

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## PROMPTS: REFLECTION

- List the main 3 people who have shaped who you are.
- Who are the people in your life that you turn to in times of need? Of joy? Of sadness? Of excitement?
- What is one person holding you back from living your best life?
- What's an experience you are grateful for?
- Who are the people you are most grateful for?
- What's a past experience that caused you pain? Reflect on why that situation was so painful.
- What's a past experience that caused you joy? What made that experience so special?
- What are some forms of self care?
- What is the last compliment you received?

## PROMPTS: REFLECTION

- What are three things that you love about yourself?
- You're at your happiest when...?
- What motivates you the most?
- What's your biggest insecurity? How can you change them?
- What are you afraid of the most?
- What do you love most about yourself?
- What brings you sadness?
- Do you care what other people think of you? Why?
- Do you like change? Why or why not?
- If you could change anything in your life right now what would it be and why?
- What is your best personality trait?



# growth

WITHOUT CONTINUAL GROWTH  
AND PROGRESS, SUCH WORDS AS  
IMPROVEMENT, ACHIEVEMENT, AND  
SUCCESS HAS NO MEANING.  
- BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

use these prompts to achieve your  
goals and grow in love.



reflection

what are your short term goals in relationships?  
career? personal? etc.?

Lined area for reflection notes.

## PROMPTS: GROWTH

- What are your short/long term goals in relationships? career? personal? etc.?
- Reflect on where you were a year ago. How have things changed?
- What do you have now that you wish you did last year?
- Daily goals
- Monthly/Yearly Goals
- Write down the positive ways you've changed over the past five to ten years?
- What makes you feel loved?
- Write down a definition of who you are. The good and the bad.

## PROMPTS: GROWTH

- Write down one good habit you want to start working on.
- What changes do you want to see in you life in five years?
- What are five things I can do to get out of my comfort zone this year?
- Write down a bad habit and how you can change it.
- Do you let the past dictate your future? Why or why not?

# just for fun

THE LIFE YOU HAVE LEFT IS A GIFT.  
CHERISH IT. ENJOY IT NOW, TO THE  
FULLEST. DO WHAT MATTERS NOW.  
- LEO BABAUTA

use these prompts to have fun and  
be authentically yourself.



just for fun

draw your dream house.

## PROMPTS: JUST FOR FUN

- Draw your dream house, vacation, etc.
- Write down a dream you had
- What does your perfect (dream) day look like?
- Who is the celebrity you'd most like to meet?
- If you could have dinner with anyone dead or alive who would it be and why?
- Who are you inviting to your dinner party (can be anyone)? What food are you serving? Where is it? What's for dessert? (maybe draw the scene?)
- If someone was making a movie about your life, who would play you? Who would play your family and friends?

## PROMPTS: JUST FOR FUN

- If you could travel anywhere, where would you go?
- If you could live inside a famous piece of art, which would it be?
- What would the title of your autobiography be?
- What is on your bucket list?
- If money wasn't an issue, how would you live the rest of your life?
- Write down some manifestations
- What animal describes you as a person? Why? Draw this animal.
- 50 things that make you smile.
- How would your best friend describe you?
- What are three things that you want to learn more about?
- What are your favorite hobbies?
- Make up a business idea. Can write or draw anything you want.

# what's next?

After completing the Kindred Mini Journal & Kindred Wellness Journal, there is still room to continue working on this project. More research can be done on mental health, therapy, & journaling. Some opportunities would be to create the Kindred app from the therapist's perspective and also user test the app and journals.

## REFLECTION

Throughout this journey of completing my senior thesis project, I have learned a lot about myself. Creating Kindred Wellness Service, **I recognized just how important mental health is.** Therapy is something that should be **available to everyone** and I hope that this platform could be something to help give **accessibility to all.** Working on this project made me incredibly **proud of my education** at Ohio State and helped me to **realize that design is what I truly want to do with my life.** My thesis project helped me grow as **not only as a designer but as a person.**



## special thanks

to my professors, Peter Chan & Paul Nini, for helping me and pushing me to make this project the best it could be

to my classmates, for always supporting me not only throughout this project but throughout the last three years

lastly, to my parents, for always giving me the resources I needed to be succesful and supporting me all throughout my college experience



be kind to  
yourself

